

Harpers Ferry

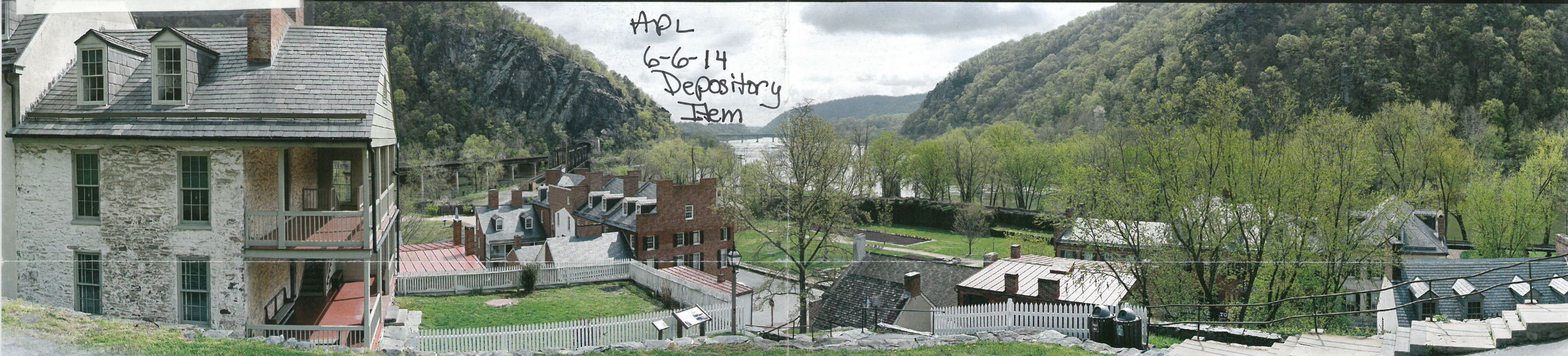
Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
Maryland / Virginia / West Virginia

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Tag. 15504 23

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6-6-14
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lights ☆ Revolution ☆ Freedom ☆ Civil War ☆ Education ☆ Civil Rights ☆ Revolution ☆ Freedom ☆ Civil War



Here at Harpers Ferry, where the Potomac River cuts through the Blue Ridge, you encounter the past and its stories in magnificent expanses and hidden quarters. In the force of these rushing waters George Washington envisioned military strength and chose Harpers Ferry as the site for a US Army. Factories from the early 1800s witnessed innovations that fueled the Industrial Revolution. Here abolitionist John Brown struck a blow against slavery, and soon the Civil War trapped the town between North and South. In the wake of war's devastation, legendary Civil Rights leaders met at Storer College and claimed "every single right that belongs to a freeborn American."

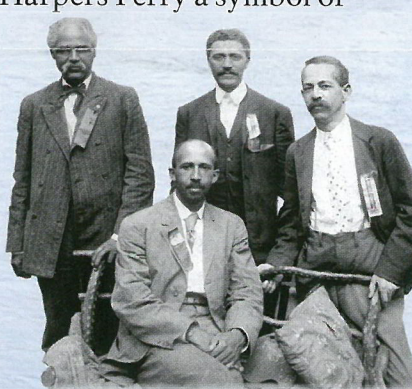
From **The Point**, where the two rivers meet, you can see the V-shaped water gap. People on the move found their way through this natural corridor—first American Indians, then European frontier folk. Robert Harper started a ferry across the Potomac here in 1747. By the early 1800s the rivers powered the armory complex and commercial mills. The revolutionary method of manufacturing with interchangeable parts was perfected at the Halls Island rifle factory. See **Industry Museum**, **US Army site**, and **Virginius and Halls islands**.

In October 1859, determined to arm enslaved people and spark rebellion, John Brown and his followers seized the armory and several other strategic points. The raid failed, with most men killed or captured. Brown's trial and execution focused attention on the issue of slavery and propelled the nation toward civil war. **John Brown's Fort** stands near its original location; nearby is the **John Brown Museum**.



US troops at **Bolivar Heights**, **Schoolhouse Ridge**, and the **Murphy-Chambers Farm**.

John Brown's raid made Harpers Ferry a symbol of freedom. Visit **Black Voices** and **John Brown Museum**. After the war Baptist missionaries founded **Storer College** to educate students of any race, male or female. Meet alumni like **Don Redman** and **Coralie**



Franklin Cook in the **Storer College** exhibit and explore the former **Storer College Campus**. Harpers Ferry also attracted national Civil Rights leaders and organizations. Visit the **Niagara Movement** exhibit and the **Murphy-Chambers Farm**.

Stroll on a level riverside path; climb to a hilltop vista point; join up with the long-distance **Appalachian Trail**, **C&O Canal towpath**, or **Potomac Heritage Trail**. A climb to **Jefferson Rock**, **Loudoun Heights**, or **Maryland Heights** will reward you with vistas of the town and its dramatic natural setting.



Top: View toward Lower Town and Potomac River gap, Harper House (town's oldest building) at left. **Left to right:** Armory grounds, late 1820s; John Brown, 1859; New York State militiaman on Camp Hill, 1862; W.E.B. Du Bois, seated, with Niagara Movement leaders at

Storer College, 1906; pioneering jazz musician Don Redman, the "little giant of jazz," at his 1920 Storer College graduation.

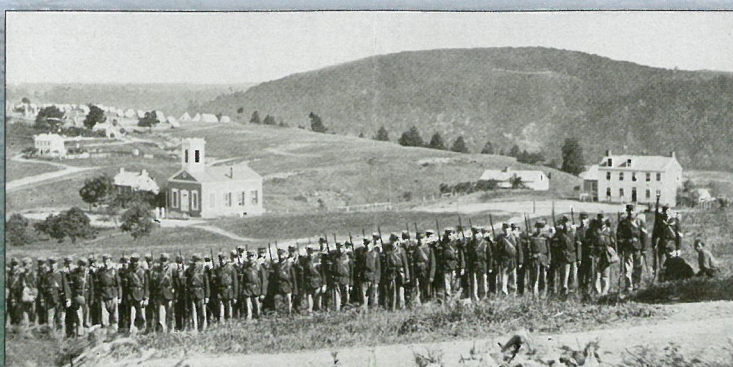
FROM TOP: HARPERS FERRY, NPS; MARK MUIR; 1820S SCENE-MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY; BROWN AND SOLDIER-LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; DU BOIS ET AL-UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND; BERTS-SUMNER; REDMAN-COURTESY; HARK D. CLARK; BELOW FROM LEFT: FERRY AND RUDD-NPS; UNION TROOPS-NATIONAL ARCHIVES; CAMP AND NIAGARA-MPS



Potomac ferry crossing and US Arsenal, ca. 1803.



Flood damage on Shenandoah Street, 1889.



22nd New York State Militia on Camp Hill, 1862.



Refugee slaves camped by John Brown's Fort, 1865.



Colored Women's League trip to John Brown's Fort, 1896.



- Public restrooms
- Shuttle bus stop
- Drinking water
- Information
- Park building
- Homes, shops, and restaurants
- Trail or walking path
- Shuttle bus route

A Films, museums, and period exhibits

- A A Place in Time (FILM)
- B Provost Marshal Office (1st floor) and Boarding house (2nd floor)
- C Dry Goods Store
- D Industry Museum
- E Philip Frankel & Co.
- F Reading an old building
- G Black Voices: African American History
- H Wetlands
- I White Hall Tavern
- J Meriwether Lewis at Harpers Ferry
- K Confectionery
- L 1862 Battle of Harpers Ferry
- M A. Burton: Fine Watch Repair
- N Storer College & Niagara Movement
- O Civil War Museum

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Visiting Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

The park is open dawn to dusk every day except Thanksgiving, December 25, and January 1. To visit the Lower Town, park at the visitor center and take the shuttle bus or walking trail. Stop at the visitor center or the Lower Town information center to plan your visit and get site maps of individual park areas and trails. Lower Town buildings are open until 5 pm daily.

EXPLORE THE PARK

Lower Town 1800s town, John Brown's Fort, armory site, period shops, films, exhibits, Appalachian Trail, C&O Canal, confluence of Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. Shopping and restaurants nearby. See detailed map on other side.

Virginus and Halls Islands Ruins of 1800s industrial complex, scenic views, trails.

Jefferson Rock Steep steps and trail to panoramic river view.

Camp Hill Harper Cemetery, restored historic buildings, Storer College campus, Curtis Freewill Baptist Church, scenic views, trails.

Maryland Heights Panoramic view of Lower Town, Union Fortifications, trails.

Loudoun Heights Panoramic river views, trails.

SELF-GUIDING BATTLEFIELD DRIVING TOUR
Exhibit panels at sites give detailed information.

1 Bolivar Heights Site of five Civil War engagements. Panoramic views, trail.

2 Lower Bolivar Heights Site of 1862 skirmish near present-day road. Earthworks, trail.

3 Schoolhouse Ridge North Site of Gen. Stonewall Jackson's line during 1862 battle. Trail.

4 Schoolhouse Ridge South Site of Confederate flanking maneuver in 1862 battle. Trail.

5 Murphy-Chambers Farm Civil War and civil rights stories came together here. Panoramic views, trails.

ACCESSIBILITY

We strive to make our facilities, services, and programs accessible to all. For information ask at the visitor center or check our website.

SAFETY

Use caution as you explore the park. Rivers can be swift and dangerous. • Lower Town roads are open to car, bus, and truck traffic. • Some park trails go through rugged backcountry. Be prepared.

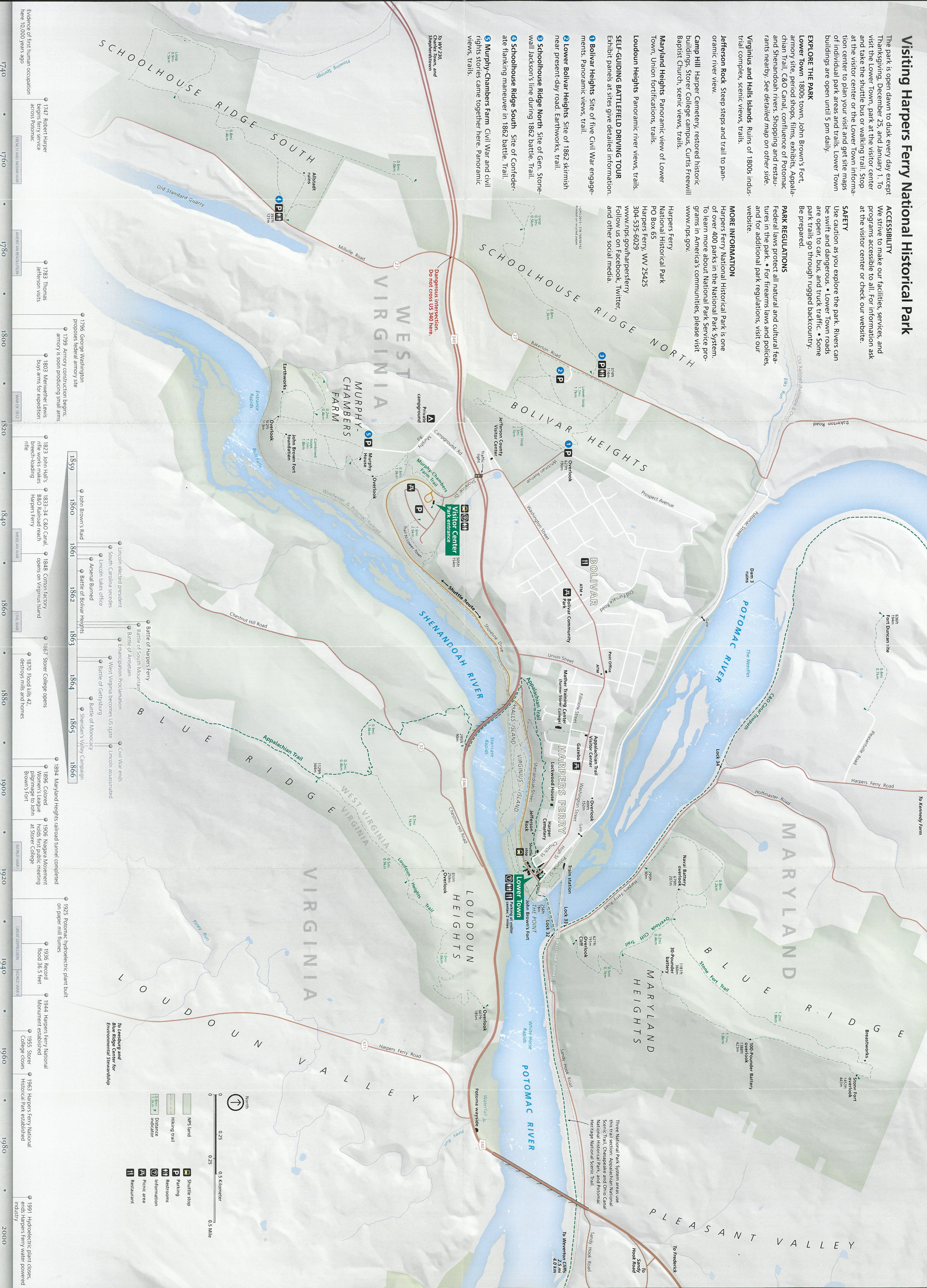
PARK REGULATIONS

Federal laws protect all natural and cultural features in the park. • For firearms laws and policies, and for additional park regulations, visit our website.

MORE INFORMATION

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about National Park Service programs in America's communities, please visit www.nps.gov.

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
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www.nps.gov/harpersferry
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1740 • 1760 • 1780 • 1800 • 1820 • 1840 • 1860 • 1880 • 1900 • 1920 • 1940 • 1960 • 1980 • 2000

1747 Robert Harper begins ferry service across Potomac

1783 Thomas Jefferson visits

1796 George Washington proposes federal armory site

1799 Armory construction begins; armory is soon producing small arms

1803 Meriwether Lewis buys arms for expedition

1823 John Hall's rifle works makes breech-loading Harpers Ferry rifle

1833-34 C&O Canal opens on Virginus Island

1837 Storer College opens

1870 Flood kills 42; destroys mills and homes

1894 Maryland Heights railroad tunnel completed on paper mill flumes

1925 Potomac hydroelectric plant built

1936 Record flood 36.5 feet

1944 Harpers Ferry National Monument established

1955 Storer College closes

1963 Harpers Ferry National Historical Park established

1991 Hydroelectric plant closes; ends Harpers Ferry water powered industry

1859 • 1860 • 1861 • 1862 • 1863 • 1864 • 1865 • 1866

John Brown's raid

Lincoln elected president

South Carolina secedes

Lincoln takes office

Arsenal burned

Battle of Antietam

Emancipation Proclamation

West Virginia becomes US state

Battle of Gettysburg

Battle of Monocacy

Sheridan's Valley Campaign

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